



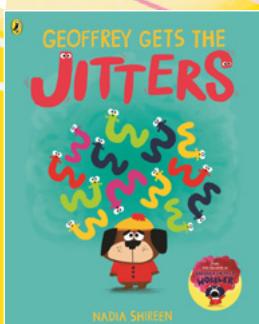
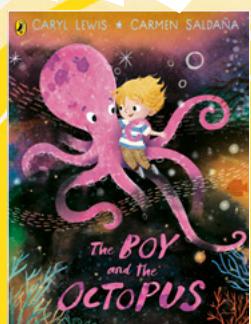
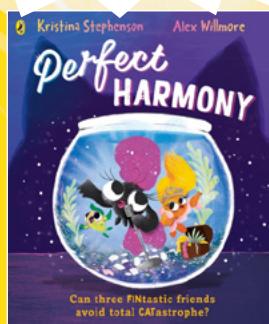
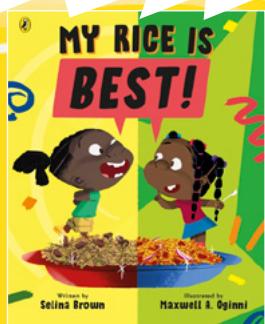
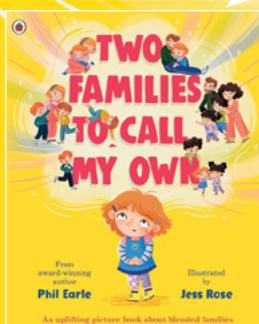
# FIRST TIME FEELINGS

## Activity Pack

Understanding and sharing feelings is a key empathy skill.

Empathy is one of the most important social and emotional skills our children need to thrive.

### FIVE BRILLIANT PICTURE BOOK ACTIVITIES TO TRY



Artwork © 2025 Jess Rose



Empathy  
Lab



# Welcome to your First Time Feelings Activity Pack!

Understanding and sharing feelings is a key empathy skill, which can be developed from the earliest age. We're delighted to share a selection of picture books which help young children, their families and caregivers explore 'first time feelings' together, with accompanying resources to help bring the books to life.

## Did you know?

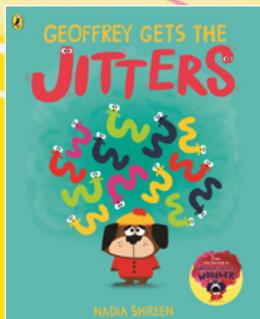
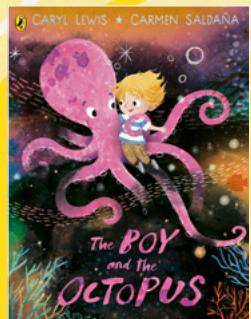
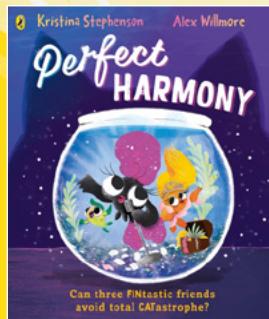
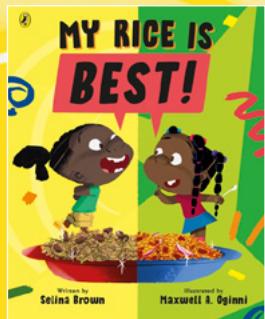
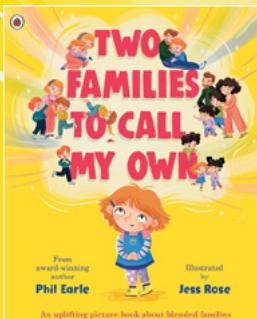
Picture books and shared reading can open up a portal to help understand challenges, new feelings and first-times as children experience them, helping families and children to navigate our complex world. Our selection of picture books explores themes experienced by young children, including belonging and inclusion, how to navigate sensitive home lives and unique settings, anxiety and nervousness, anger and mood management, and more.

## Watch the authors

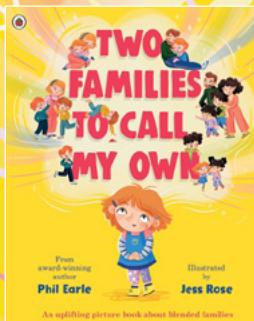
Find out what each of the authors do to demonstrate empathy in everyday life and their stories in a brand-new video created watch in your setting as part of the Empathy Day Festival. You can watch that here: [xx](#)

**Win a £100 library of Puffin picture books!**

Puffin are very generously offering **THREE** lucky settings the chance to win **£100 of empathy-boosting picture books EACH**. To enter, simply share photos of your setting's Empathy Day Festival activity with us by 13 June and we will choose out three favourites and announce them on the 16th. Email entries to [empathyday@empathylab.uk](mailto:empathyday@empathylab.uk) with the subject **First Time Feelings**. T&C's apply.



# About The Books



## Two Families To Call My Own

*Phil Earle, illustrated by Jess Rose*

Florrie now lives in two different houses: One with her mum. One with her dad. And everything finally feels just right. Until Florrie's dad gets a new girlfriend... who's not her mum! Will having two families be too much for Florrie?

A comforting picture book tackling the tricky emotions that surface when blending families after a separation, while celebrating new connections.

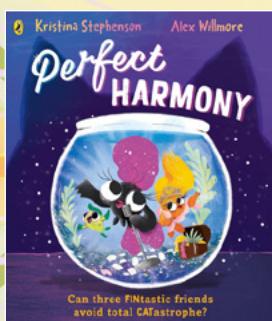


## My Rice is Best

*Selina Brown, illustrated by Maxwell A. Oginni*

Join Shane and friends as they attempt to settle the age-old question of which rice dish is the best! Shane is convinced that nothing beats a big, delicious bowl of rice and peas - it's the best rice in the world! But when he brings his favourite meal to school, he discovers that his friend Yinka is just as passionate about her jollof rice. What follows is a hilarious and heartfelt showdown to settle the age-old question: which rice reigns supreme?

A laugh-out-loud, heartwarming picture book that brings the joy of food, friendship, and cultural pride to life, *My Rice is Best* explores the playful rivalry between two friends who both believe their rice dish is the ultimate favourite.



## Perfect Harmony

*Kristina Stephenson, illustrated by Alex Willmore*

Maureen, Titchy Fish and Ada were different as different could be.

But size and shape and colour didn't matter to these friends in their own little sea.

Maureen, Titchy Fish and Ada are friends who share an extraordinary talent - they love to sing! But disaster looms when the warbling trio have their first big fallout just as an alley cat - Tabby McClaw - creeps into the house and sets his sights on Ada for a tasty snack . . . Will the three fish resolve their differences? And will friendship be enough to save Ada from Tabby's claws?



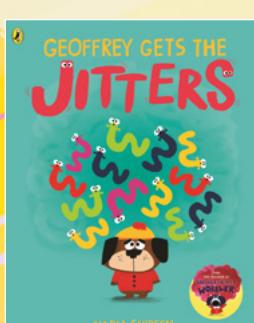
## The Boy and the Octopus

*Caryl Lewis, illustrated by Carmen Saldana*

Stanley loves his octopus toy, and dreams of the magical way its skin changes colour; how it hides itself when something scary comes along. In fact, sometimes Stanley wants to be like his octopus and disappear.

But Stanley learns how to share his feelings in more than words, and to face difficulties through the power of self-expression and creativity.

A lyrical and emotional story about overcoming bullies and being proud to be seen.



## Geoffrey Gets The Jitters

*Nadia Shireen*

Geoffrey's got the jitters! It started last night when he was thinking about school - a funny, wiggly feeling in his tummy that grew and grew. But when Geoffrey's tummy jitters started talking to him - that's when he knew they were out of control. Geoffrey had to do something...

Through a laugh-out-loud story and loveable character, Nadia Shireen shows how to understand and dispel anxieties, one jitter at a time.



# Two Families To Call my Own

# Wordsearch

Can you find all the words below in this wordsearch? Inspired by Florrie's bond with her two families, why not use the words to discuss what it means to have a family and a place to call home – no matter what shape or size – with your little one?

J	X	M	C	H	A	N	G	E	M
G	S	Z	C	U	D	D	L	E	S
L	O	J	E	G	E	F	F	F	S
L	E	G	R	R	M	K	A	P	R
G	G	J	A	S	H	M	S	L	E
Z	U	H	A	I	I	A	Z	A	E
T	S	I	B	L	I	N	G	Y	M
W	H	O	Y	A	F	D	H	J	O
F	N	R	L	D	N	A	A	I	H
D	N	E	I	R	F	E	D	R	V

## Words to find:

## Home

## Friend

## Cuddles

## Sibling

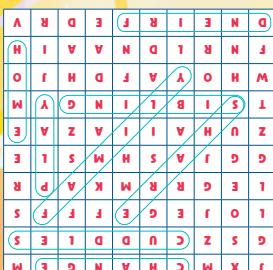
## Share

## Change

## Play

## Family

## Answers





# My Rice Is Best

## Spot The Difference

Shane and Yinka's opinion on the best meal is different – and neither of them wants to change their mind! We've made five changes to the below image – can you spot them?



Picture 1



Picture 2

Answers



# Perfect Harmony

## Singing Exercise

In *Perfect Harmony*, Maureen, Titchy Fish and Ada are all different, but are still the best of friends! They enjoy singing and creating music together. In this activity, get together with your friends, family members or caregivers to express yourselves through music and song!

Try the below exercises and discuss how each one makes you feel:

1.  
**Can you... sing at the top of your lungs?! Fill the whole room with sound, and create music together!**

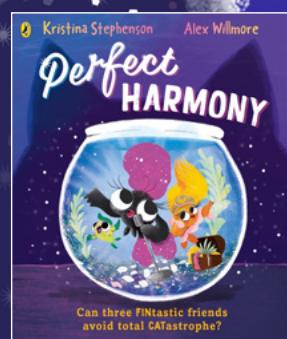


2.  
**Can you... sing the chorus of your very favourite song? Do you know all the words? Does it make you feel happy?**

3.  
**Can you... drum?! Work with a parent or caregiver to find an item, and drum a powerful beat with your hands - does it feel good afterwards?**

4.  
**Can you... put on a song you love and dance to it? Be sure to have lots of fun and use up your energy!**

5.  
**Can you... wind down with a breathing exercise? Sit on the floor, close your eyes, and breathe in deeply for 1-2-3-4 seconds, then breathe out slowly for 1-2-3-4 seconds. Repeat and relax.**



# The Boy and the Octopus

## Colouring In

*The Boy and The Octopus* is a beautiful book that shows how Stanley brings colour to his life through the power of imagination. Can you colour in the below image with your little one, and help spark their creativity?



# Geoffrey Gets The Jitters

## Feelings Chart

Geoffrey is visited by his 'jitters' throughout the story – can you and your little one use the expressions on the below wibbly wobbly worms to identify what they're feeling?

We've given you options to match each expression to:

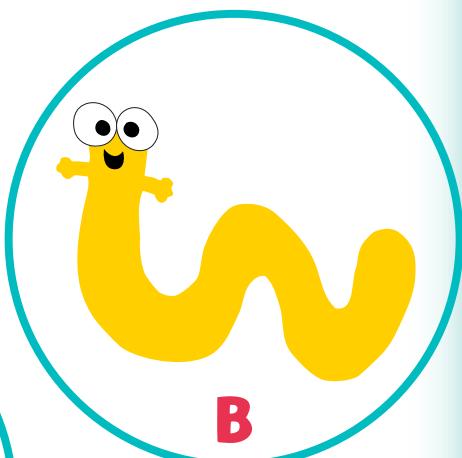
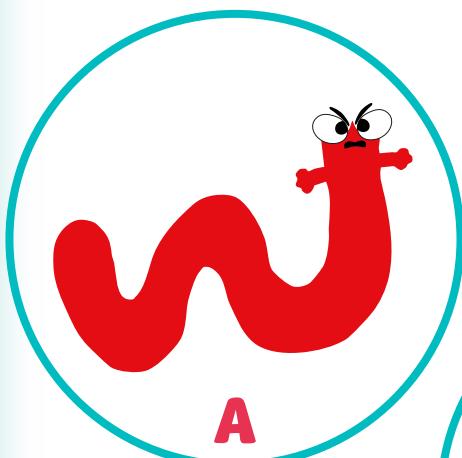
**Happy** .....

**Sad** .....

**Angry** .....

**Anxious** .....

**Scared** .....



### Answers

Scared: E  
Anxious: C  
Sad: D  
Angry: A  
Happy: B

